

OCA 88-1285
22 April 1988

OCA FILE

SSCI

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing on Security Evaluation Office for SSCI Staff

1. On 21 April 1988, [] Director of the Security Evaluation Office (SEO) [] SEO Executive Officer, [] Office of the Comptroller and the undersigned met with Keith Hall and John Elliff of the SSCI staff to brief them on the mission, functions, and resource requirements for the new Security Evaluation Office. 25X1

2. Using the attached charts, [] provided details on the background, the functions, the organization, manning and resources needed for SEO. Some of the key points made during the briefing were: 25X1

--The Office must have a direct reporting relationship to the DCI.

--Disputes which can not be resolved by the High Level Board, [] believes must be reported to both the President and the oversight Committees 25X1

--The relationship with State's Diplomatic Security is key to the success of SEO. [] has met with Lamb and reached an understanding of how they will work with each other. 25X1

--SEO will need [] in FY 1989. SEO will be small in structure and will seek not to duplicate the activities of other units in CIA, NSA and State Department. Rather, the office will work closely with units in these organizations and will not duplicate their work. 25X1

--Hall asked about the location for SEO. [] responded that they are currently working on the problem, looking at [] Rosslyn, or Tysons. In addition, the Office would have a small amount of space at CIA Headquarters for [] to keep in touch with the Director and to have a few people working closely with CIA units such as CIC. 25X1

[] expressed hope that State would also allow a small amount of space there to ensure close cooperation with the Department. 25X1

[] 25X1

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3. The SSCI staffers had several questions regarding the independence of SEO and the relationships with State, NSA and CIA, but [] provided convincing arguments covering these concerns and seemed to persuade the staffers that while independence and positive working relationships are difficult problems they are resolvable over time.

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4. Both Elliff and Hall seemed satisfied with the briefing and comfortable with the numbers of dollars and positions requested. Indeed, some concern was expressed that the unit would be too small to have the necessary clout. The major question from Hall regarded where the funds for SEO would be put. Possibilities range from a public line item to direct funding in the DCI area, with some kind of Community or IC Staff relationship in between.

-- Hall seemed to prefer a public line item and noted that some House members and staffers were even more interested in this approach than was SSCI because it would show the public that something was being done (and members could take credit for it.) [] argued strenuously against this approach, but Hall warned that, although SSCI might buy this argument, HPSCI probably would not.

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-- Hall noted that State had argued against direct funding from the CIA--i.e., organizing the unit along the lines of another office in the DCI area similar to the NIC, which has clear Community responsibilities but is housed, funded, and largely staffed by the CIA. [] responded that his clear understanding with State was that their potential problem was not with funding but with lines of authority: State's concern was that SEO must be a direct arm of the DCI and not buried several bureaucratic layers below. According to [] as long as the head of SEO reported directly to the DCI, State did not have a problem.

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-- The in-between possibilities raise an important substantive issue. [] stated forcefully that SEO will not work if it is funded/organized like [] which reports to the IC Staff. [] insists that SEO must report directly to the DCI. Something separate from the Agency, not related to the IC Staff, reporting directly to the DCI, and funded somehow, could be arranged, but with some difficulty.

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5. The question of funding must be resolved before an SSCI Question for the Record goes forward. [redacted] staff drafted a sentence in the QFR that states that SEO will be funded like the NIC. The IC Staff changed the sentence to read that SEO will be funded like [redacted]. The issue is not trivial; the question of where the funds came from is substantive, bureaucratic, and political, and the final decision may affect the future effectiveness of the organization.

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Senate Division
Congressional Affairs

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